



Guidelines for Small Businesses and Food Service Establishments

COMPLYING WITH SANITARY SEWER AND STORMWATER REQUIREMENTS

Businesses and restaurants play an important role in preventing water pollution and sewer blockages. Pollutants washed into storm drains can threaten the water quality and habitat in local streams, where the stormwater is discharged, untreated. Proper disposal of fats, oils and greases is required by Columbus City Code to help prevent sewer blockages in the sewers, back-ups and overflows. To comply with city and state regulations on stormwater and sanitary sewer discharges, business and restaurant owners, managers and employees should practice the following, where applicable for your business:

- **Dispose of wastewater, also known as gray water, inside through a drain connected to the sanitary sewer -- not through an outside storm drain.** It is prohibited by the city of Columbus and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to dump wastewater into storm drains, parking lots or open waterways. Remember, “only rain down the storm drain.”
- **Wash business vehicles in designated car wash areas that are covered, curbed and graded to drain to the city’s sanitary sewer system where the wastewater is directed to a wastewater treatment plant.** Vehicles may not be washed on an outside parking lot that is connected to the stormwater system unless the process wastewater is collected and properly disposed. Most open parking lot drains are connected to the separate storm system and the untreated soapy wastewater would drain to a stream or river. For more information, please call 645-6311.
- **Sweep or pick up litter around your property; do not flush into storm drains.**
- **Store grease containers away from storm drains to prevent spills.** Keep containers properly covered and in a secure area, like behind a dumpster fence, where it cannot be easily spilled.
- **Keep trash dumpster lids closed and make sure your dumpster is not leaking liquids.**
- **Do not use soap or degreasers when cleaning sidewalks, parking lots or restaurant equipment outside. Don’t flush off the area with clear water unless the resulting process wastewater is collected and properly disposed.** Absorb oily residue with an absorbent material such as cat litter or paper towels and sweep up debris.
- **Use lawn chemicals and de-icing materials only as needed,** following all instructions, without applying more than the recommended amount.
- **Kitchen grease must be disposed of only through drains equipped with a grease trap or interceptor connected to the sanitary sewer system.** Food service establishments using the Columbus sanitary sewer system are required to use approved grease traps and to maintain a Best Management Plan to prevent fats, oils and grease from entering the sewer system. Recovery costs and fines apply for violations. For more information please visit www.utilities.columbus.gov or call the Industrial Wastewater Pretreatment office at 645-5876.
- **Dispose of all hazardous chemicals properly.** Please contact the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio at 871-5100 or visit www.swaco.org for more information.
- **Make sure that any contractors your business uses are aware of the proper procedures.** Your business may be held responsible for their actions.
- **Report any hazardous spills, accidents or dumping immediately to 311, 645-3111 or 645-7102.** Also please notify the Ohio EPA at 1-800-282-9378.



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